



County of Los Angeles CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE B. BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

February 3, 2006

To: Mayor Michael Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David E. Janssen", is written over the printed name and title of the Chief Administrative Officer.

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

Legislation of Interest to the County

On January 9, 2006, Assembly Member Jones introduced AB 1363, the Omnibus Conservatorship and Guardianship Reform Act of 2006. The bill would: 1) strengthen oversight of conservators and guardians; 2) require State licensing of conservators; 3) establish a Conservatorship Ombudsman within the State Department of Aging; 4) remove professional conservators and guardians from the statewide registry and local court registry and transfer responsibility for the statewide registry to the State Department of Consumer Affairs; and 5) require the Judicial Council to develop qualifications and continuing education requirements and standards for probate judges, court attorneys, and court investigators and establish uniform standards for conservatorships and guardians by July 1, 2007. AB 1363 passed the Assembly on January 26, 2006 by a vote of 55 to 10. The bill now moves to the Senate.

Members of the Conservatorship Task Force established by your Board in November 2005 are reviewing AB 1363 for impact to the County. A complete analysis of AB 1363 with a recommended position will be provided to your Board upon receipt of comments from the Task Force members.

Court Facility Bonds

The Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees have completed their hearings on the Governor's proposal for \$1.8 billion in court facility bonds. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) testified that there is a \$9.8 billion statewide need, with \$800 million of that

amount attributable to County-occupied space. The Department of Finance indicated that \$1.8 billion is all that can be allocated to the courts as part of the Governor's infrastructure bond package. William Vickery, Administrative Director of the AOC, testified in support of the concept of public/private partnership to provide flexibility and increased efficiency in order to move court facility projects ahead. The County's Sacramento advocate provided testimony reflecting the Board's support for the bond proposal, the need for language to authorize use of public/private partnership efforts, and the Board's willingness to have a pilot project in Los Angeles County. The Senate Judiciary Committee will issue majority and minority reports to be sent on to the conference committee. The Assembly Judiciary Committee has not yet announced how it plans to communicate recommendations to the conference committee.

Hearing of the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families

On February 2, 2006, the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families held an informational hearing to discuss potential funding mechanisms to provide healthcare access and delivery to every child in California. Presentations were made by the California Endowment, State Department of Health Services, the Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board (MRMIB), and several children's health advocacy groups.

The Chair of the Select Committee, Senator Liz Figueroa, stated her intention to explore all avenues to insure children in California. A representative for the California Endowment indicated that 90 percent of all children in California are insured and that about 800,000 are uninsured. Of the 800,000, a large portion is eligible for either Medi-Cal or the Healthy Families Programs. It was noted that County Health Initiatives (CHI), including the one in Los Angeles County, have greatly improved access to care for children, but that CHI's are becoming financially challenged and are experiencing long waiting lists.

A spokesperson for the State Department of Health Services summarized the successful effects of coverage expansion in recent years which included: (1) establishing a joint application for the Medi-Cal/Healthy Families Program, (2) increasing the income level of parents to 100 percent of the federal poverty level in the 1931(b) program, and (3) creating the CHDP gateway program which allows children short-term eligibility in the Medi-Cal or Healthy Families Programs pending final determination of the application. The Department also reiterated the Governor's Budget Proposal, which includes \$72.2 million to enroll about 400,000 eligible children who are not enrolled in the Medi-Cal and Healthy Families Programs. The MRMIB representative spoke about the success of the Healthy Families Program, but indicated that the State will lack adequate Federal funding when the S-CHIP Program is reauthorized in FFY 2008.

Representatives for the California Endowment and the United Way indicated that more businesses are realizing the importance of providing health insurance and are willing to discuss potential coverage, as long as coverage is not mandated on employers. Businesses remain concerned about the skyrocketing cost of health insurance premiums.

Children's health advocacy groups cited the new ballot initiative which would increase the tax on a pack of cigarettes by \$2.60 to fund coverage expansion for children. According to the initiative's proponents, \$405 million would be annually earmarked for children's health programs. The advocates further stated that recent polls show that about 78 percent of Californians believe that children should be insured.

Hospital Financing Waiver Hearing Rescheduled

A Joint Informational Hearing of the Senate Health Committee, the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3, the Assembly Health Committee and the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 1 has once again been rescheduled from Tuesday, February 21, 2006 to Tuesday, February 14, 2006. The hearing will be held from 10 a.m. to noon, and it will focus on the implementation of the Hospital Financing Waiver and the coverage initiative. Representatives from the Administration and the hospital industry will be presenting testimony.

Status of County-Interest Legislation

County-supported AB 158 (Bermudez), which would create the Special Railroad Safety Task Force to study certain railroad safety issues, including vandalism, transporting hazardous waste, and identifying threats from terrorism, deficiencies in current land use planning and response to railroad emergencies, and make recommendations for improving railroad safety, passed the Assembly on January 26, 2006 by a vote of 78 to 0 and now proceeds to the Senate.

We will continue to keep you advised.

DEJ:GK
MAL:JF:VE:EW:MS:cc

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 County Counsel
 Local 660
 All Department Heads
 Legislative Strategist
 Coalition of County Unions
 California Contract Cities Association
 Independent Cities Association
 League of California Cities
 City Managers Associations
 Buddy Program Participants